Intergovernmental Strategic Coordination: The Business Plan for Intergovernmental Affairs 2002-03

A. Mission

To provide leadership in the development of corporate strategies for Nova Scotia's relations with governments and organizations.

B. Planning Context

Intergovernmental Affairs is the central coordinating agency for the Executive Council in the field of intergovernmental affairs. It is responsible for coordinating the Province's relations with the Federal government, other Provinces and Territories, and foreign governments at the national and subnational levels.

A specific, and major, element of the planning context this year is the Annual Premiers' Conference, to be held in Halifax in August. The conference, chaired by Nova Scotia, represents a unique opportunity to ensure that Nova Scotia's views are considered in a national intergovernmental forum that influences Federal and Provincial policy and promotes interprovincial cooperation.

In general, the fact that the Government of Nova Scotia receives 38.1% of its revenue from Federal sources is reason enough to pay attention to intergovernmental relations. With recent events, however, the need for a coordinated Nova Scotian approach to intergovernmental relations has never been greater.

The slowdown in the economy since the third quarter of 2001, exacerbated by the repercussions of the events of 11 September, has increased both the need for Federal/Provincial cooperation to provide economic stimulus and for renewed fiscal arrangements to address the increased social, health and public service needs in this Province.

While the Federal budget of 10 December 2001 focused on security expenditures, there was some funding for Infrastructure, and the Innovation and Skills and Learning agendas, among others, which are important to Nova Scotia. In these circumstances, effective intergovernmental communication is required to ensure that Nova Scotia receives its fair share of whatever program funding is available.

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Interprovincially, there is a developing trend towards increased consultation and cooperation. Since 1995, Annual Premiers' Conferences have witnessed greater solidarity between the Provinces and Territories in calling for changes to Federal policy and fiscal arrangements, particularly for health care, post-secondary education and transportation infrastructure. Premiers have also agreed to achieve higher levels of cooperation between the Provinces and Territories themselves.

The trend is even more pronounced at the regional level, where the four Atlantic Provinces have adopted common positions for the improvement of fiscal arrangements and an Atlantic Action Plan for regional cooperation in areas ranging from health and post-secondary education to resource development. The cooperation agenda will be a prominent feature of the Annual Premiers' Conference as well as the meeting of the Council of Atlantic Premiers to be held in Nova Scotia in 2002.

Finally, the events of 11 September have heightened the importance of the Province's international relations, particularly with the United States. To the softwood lumber issue have been added border security and transportation/air access issues. And the New England Governors/Eastern Canadian Premiers' Conference has established an ambitious environmental and trade agenda, apart from becoming a major forum for resolution of cross-border issues.

In this environment, Intergovernmental Affairs must, through its direct relations with the Federal Privy Council Office and intergovernmental agencies in other Provinces, promote an intergovernmental negotiating climate that reduces causes of friction between jurisdictions so that constructive negotiations may occur.

Furthermore, coordination of Nova Scotia's intergovernmental relations is essential to ensure that consistent messages are relayed by Nova Scotian departments and agencies to our negotiating partners.

On the one hand, the increasing number of issues requiring intergovernmental cooperation to resolve has led line departments to create specialized Federal-Provincial or intergovernmental sections. The relationship of Intergovernmental Affairs to these sections resembles the relationship between Treasury and Policy Board and the various departmental policy sections throughout government. The line departments focus on their own specific and often technical issues, while the central agencies provide a government-wide perspective and corporate coordination.

On the other hand, more and more intergovernmental issues are horizontal in nature, that is, their solution requires input and action from more than one department. Frequently, too, the Federal Government considers that an issue - such as children, or urban affairs - transcends jurisdiction, and seeks a solution involving not only several departments, but also more than one order of government.

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Intergovernmental Affairs is then called upon to coordinate these "residual" or "orphan" files, which do not fall neatly into any single line department's area of responsibility. Furthermore, fiscal constraint in some line departments may require Intergovernmental Affairs to take a more active role in intergovernmental negotiations on technical issues, as it already does on the climate change file.

Since the Nova Scotia Office of Intergovernmental Affairs is one of the smallest intergovernmental agencies in Canada, its resources will be stretched to fulfil its mandated objectives and additional responsibilities. These pressures can be resolved, however, through collaboration with line departments and agencies, clearer definition of intergovernmental roles, and a stress on effective information exchange and coordinated communications about intergovernmental matters by all departments and agencies.

C. Strategic Goals

These are the goals of the agency responsible for intergovernmental relations which by their nature support and advance the government's priorities of: *put and keep Nova Scotia's finances in order; put crucial services - health, education, social services - on a sustainable footing; provide responsible, accountable government; create conditions that help the economy grow; provide Nova Scotians with an opportunity to learn throughout their lives, so that they can continue to succeed in a rapidly changing world; foster an environment that allows and encourages Nova Scotians to work, raise families, and stay in Nova Scotia.*

1. Ensure the interests of Nova Scotia are preserved and promoted in relations and negotiations with other governments in Canada and abroad.

2. Promote and foster cooperation between the Provinces of Atlantic Canada in development of policy and delivery of services.

3. Ensure that information regarding policies and initiatives in other governments that can affect Nova Scotia is accurately and promptly provided to the decision-makers responsible for advancing this government's core priorities.

D. Core Business Areas

1. Coordinate the overall intergovernmental strategy of the Nova Scotia government, to ensure a corporate approach to other governments.

2. Ensure fairness to Nova Scotia in negotiations with the government of Canada and other governments.

3. Build on regional alliances to promote issues of fairness for Nova Scotians and Atlantic Canadians, and to promote regional programs and services which benefit citizens.

4. Expand Nova Scotia's international linkages to support and promote Nova Scotia's interests abroad.

5. Increase awareness and understanding, both within the Nova Scotia government and in other governments, of this Province's position relative to key intergovernmental issues.

E. Priorities

1. **Coordinate the overall intergovernmental strategy of the Nova Scotia government to ensure a corporate approach to other governments.**

    - Gather intelligence and develop central agency expertise by monitoring Federal and other Provincial developments to ensure that the Nova Scotia government can act in a proactive fashion.
    - Develop Nova Scotia's position on Canadian governance issues, national unity and Constitutional matters and advance these positions with the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments.
    - Provide strategic policy advice and support to the Premier as he advances Nova Scotia's priority agenda at First Ministers' Meetings, Annual Premiers' Conferences and other key intergovernmental meetings.
    - Through consultation with line departments, promote the identification of intergovernmental priorities and of opportunities for Federal-Provincial and interprovincial cooperation.
    - Build strategic alliances on Federal-Provincial issues with other Provinces and Territories so as to develop common positions that Premiers and Ministers can advance to Ottawa.

- Ensure that the implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Social Union addresses Nova Scotia's concerns and needs through participation in intergovernmental and interdepartmental committees.

2. **Ensure fairness to Nova Scotia in negotiations with the government of Canada and other governments.**

- Take full advantage of the opportunities provided by Nova Scotia's position as chair of the Annual Premiers' Conference (APC), 2002-03, to ensure that Nova Scotia's concerns and interests are known and considered in the development of the agenda of the Conference, and in the follow-up work with the other Provinces and Territories that implements the Premiers' decisions.
- Provide operational and strategic policy support for negotiations with other Federal-Provincial-Territorial governments.
- In close collaboration with the Department of Finance, seek to achieve changes in existing Federal-Provincial fiscal arrangements to attain fairness for Nova Scotians by coordinating negotiations with the Federal government at the First Ministers' level on Equalization and other fiscal arrangements.
- Coordinate the development of this Province's intergovernmental and negotiating positions in such key areas as Climate Change, the social union and improved Federal support for post-secondary education, health and economic development.
- Work closely with Provincial departments engaged in negotiations on key Nova Scotia government priorities, such as fiscal arrangements, transportation infrastructure, health, security and skills and Labour Market issues.

3. **Build on regional alliances to promote issues of fairness for Nova Scotians and Atlantic Canadians, and to promote regional programs and services which benefit citizens.**

- Identify areas where a united Atlantic position towards Ottawa can yield policy and material benefits and work with Atlantic officials to develop this position for Premiers' approval.
- Coordinate the implementation of the Atlantic Action Plan and continue to identify areas where regional cooperation can yield economies of scale and more efficient delivery of services to Nova Scotians and work with Atlantic officials to develop program proposals for Premiers' approval.

- Provide strategic advice and support to the Premier for and during meetings of the Council of Atlantic Premiers, of the Council of Maritime Premiers, and of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers.
- Participate in the Steering Committee on Regional Cooperation (SCRC) which is the intergovernmental coordinating committee that provides executive support to, and negotiates the agenda for, the Council of Maritime Premiers (CMP) and the Council of Atlantic Premiers (CAP).
- Provide strategic policy assessments to the Premier and the Executive Council on the role and future directions of the Council of Maritime Premiers and the Council of Atlantic Premiers and other regional economic and policy issues.
- Participate in the Coordinating Committee which coordinates all activities of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEG/ECP) Conference and meets as required between annual meetings of the principals.
- Identify areas where a united NEG/ECP position towards their respective Federal governments can yield policy and material benefits and work with the regional officials to develop this position for Premiers' and Governors' approval.
- Co-chair with the State of Maine the NEG/ECP Standing Committee on Trade and Globalization directed to examine and make recommendations regarding issues, opportunities and constraints related to transborder trade and globalization relative to the New England and Eastern Canadian regions.

4. Expand Nova Scotia's international linkages to support and promote Nova Scotia's interests abroad.

- Ensure that Nova Scotia's interests are fairly considered in the development of solutions to transborder issues.
- Support the development of trade and investment and ensure Nova Scotia departments and agencies are kept abreast of international ideas.
- Manage, with Nova Scotia Business Incorporated, the participation of the Premier in Team Canada and Team Canada Atlantic Trade Missions.
- Collaborate with Economic Development and Protocol to ensure that the Premier is fully briefed for visits of foreign Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Consuls.
- Ensure that Nova Scotia policy positions are conveyed, as necessary, to Canadian diplomatic posts abroad, in particular, to the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC, the Consulate-General in Boston, Massachusetts, and other posts in the United States.
- Ensure that Nova Scotia's policy and trade positions are known to the appropriate diplomatic representatives accredited to Canada.

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- Provide line departments and agencies with information gathered from foreign governments and from the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), and its posts abroad.
- Maintain and update the database of Nova Scotia's memoranda of understanding with foreign governments.

5. **Increase awareness and understanding, both within the Nova Scotia government and in other governments, of this Province's position relative to key intergovernmental issues.**

- Take full advantage of the opportunities provided by Nova Scotia's position as chair of the Annual Premiers' Conference, 2002-03, to ensure that Nova Scotia's concerns and interests are known and considered in the development of the agenda of the Conference, and in the follow-up work with the other Provinces and Territories that implements the Premiers' decisions.
- Ensure that the Nova Scotian perspective is considered in the development of Federal policy by working with the Intergovernmental Affairs section of the Privy Council Office, and with other Federal agencies and departments in Ottawa and in the Atlantic region (e. g., the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency).
- Maintain and expand the network of Federal, Provincial and Territorial contacts in Intergovernmental Affairs and other departments so as to exchange information and policy positions.
- Maintain regular contact with line departments respecting their intergovernmental activity, and keep them abreast of issues involving other governments and Intergovernmental Affairs activities.
- Develop communications objectives to better position the Province of Nova Scotia in its communications with other jurisdictions and with key internal audiences.

F. Budget Context

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS	2001-02	2002-03
	Budget (000's)	Budget (000's)
Administration and Support	$ 996.00	$ 955.00
Grants	$ 95.00	$ 95.00
Hosting of the 43rd Annual Premiers' Conference and the 5th Session of the Council of Atlantic Premiers	—	$ 275.00
Total Gross (and net)	$ 1,091.00	$ 1,325.00
Salaries and Benefits	$ 621.90	$ 635.50
Funded Staff	$ 9.00	$ 9.00

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F. Outcomes and Outcome Measures

To assess the extent to which Nova Scotia's interests are being advanced in a consistent and effective manner in all of this Province's relations with other governments, Intergovernmental Affairs has developed the specific outcome measures listed below. While the measures specifically relate to the core businesses of Intergovernmental Affairs, they also serve as qualitative or quantitative measures of performance within three broad outcome areas:

1. The development of an enhanced understanding and acceptance, in this government and among other governments, of Nova Scotia's priority interests and positions in intergovernmental matters;

2. Interdepartmental coordination to ensure a corporate, priority-based, approach to Federal-Provincial/ Territorial issues, especially where they cut across several departments' responsibilities;

3. Ensuring that intergovernmental negotiations are conducted according to the corporate priorities of the Government of Nova Scotia and on the basis of thorough knowledge of the issues involved and of the interests and positions of other governments.

It should be noted that it is not always possible to control the outcomes of activities which involve either negotiation or delivery by line departments. Many of Intergovernmental Affairs' activities are thus not directly quantifiable. Also, Intergovernmental Affairs is in a developmental year with respect to its measurement of performance and is looking to monitor a number of additional outcomes in the coming year. It is expected that these data will provide base year measures for new outcomes that will better reflect the value added by Intergovernmental Affairs' activities and our progress in fulfilling our core business functions.

Coordinate the overall intergovernmental strategy of the Nova Scotia government to ensure a corporate approach to other governments.					
Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Base year measure	Target 04-05	Strategies to achieve the target
Greater understanding of corporate positions and priorities relative to intergovernmental issues and negotiation	Increased awareness of IG issues	Degree of improvement in the level of awareness of NS IG priorities across the government	66% of clients indicated that IGA had been successful in communicating NS key positions relative to intergovernmental issues	75%	*Gather intelligence and develop central agency expertise by monitoring Federal and other Provincial developments to ensure that the Nova Scotia government can act in a proactive fashion * Develop Nova Scotia's position on Canadian governance issues, national unity and Constitutional matters and advance these positions with the F/P/T Governments * Provide strategic policy advice and support to the Premier as he advances Nova Scotia's priority agenda at First Ministers' Meetings, Annual Premiers' Conferences and other key intergovernmental meetings * Through consultation with Federal-Provincial line departments, support the identification of priorities and opportunities for Federal-Provincial cooperation * Build strategic alliances on Federal-Provincial issues with other Provinces and Territories so as to develop common positions that Premiers and Ministers can advance to Ottawa * Ensure the implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Social Union addresses Nova Scotia's concerns and needs through participation in intergovernmental and interdepartmental committees

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Ensure fairness to Nova Scotia in negotiations with the government of Canada and other governments.					
Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Base year measure	Target 04-05	Strategies to achieve the target
Nova Scotia positions reflected in bilateral and multilateral negotiations and agreements reached with the Federal and other governments	Acknowledgment within the NS Government of efforts to ensure fairness in negotiations	Percentage of client departments recognizing IGA's role in ensuring fairness for NS in negotiations	63% of IGA clients indicate that the principle of fairness played an important role in intergovernmental negotiations and discussion	80%	• Take full advantage of the opportunities provided by Nova Scotia's position as chair of the Annual Premiers' Conference, 2002-03, to ensure that Nova Scotia's concerns and interests are known and considered in the development of the agenda of the Conference, and in the follow-up work with the other Provinces and Territories that implements the Premiers' decisions • Provide operational and strategic policy support for negotiations with other Federal-Provincial-Territorial governments • In close collaboration with the Department of Finance, seek to achieve changes in existing Federal-Provincial fiscal arrangements to attain fairness for Nova Scotians by coordinating negotiations with the Federal government at the First Ministers' level on Equalization and other fiscal arrangements • Coordinate the development of this Province's intergovernmental and negotiating positions in such key areas as Climate Change, the social union and improved Federal support for post-secondary education, health and economic development • Work closely with Provincial departments engaged in negotiations on key Nova Scotia government priorities, such as fiscal arrangements, transportation infrastructure, health, security and skills and Labour Market issues

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Build on regional alliances to promote issues of fairness for Nova Scotians and Atlantic Canadians, and to promote regional programs and services which benefit citizens.					
Outcome	**Indicator**	**Measure**	**Base year measure**	**Target 04-05**	**Strategies to achieve target**
Stronger regional cooperation	Negotiation and completion of bilateral and multilateral agreements with Atlantic Provinces that result in common program or service delivery, or other cooperative ventures	Regional alliances and initiatives assisted by Intergovernmental Affairs	• 66% of clients said IGA had been instrumental in building regional alliances	• 80%	• Identify areas where a united Atlantic position towards Ottawa can yield policy and material benefits and work with Atlantic officials to develop this position for Premiers' approval • Coordinate the implementation of the Atlantic Action Plan and continue to identify areas where regional cooperation can yield economies of scale and more efficient delivery of services to Nova Scotians and work with Atlantic officials to develop program proposals for Premiers' approval • Provide strategic advice and support to the Premier for and during meetings of the Council of Atlantic Premiers, in particular, the April 2002 Council of Atlantic Premiers' Meeting to be held in Nova Scotia • Participate in the Steering Committee on Regional Cooperation (SCRC) which is the intergovernmental coordinating committee that provides executive support to the Council of Maritime Premiers (CMP) and the Council of Atlantic Premiers (CAP) • Provide strategic policy assessments to the Premier and the Executive Council on the role and future directions of the Council of Maritime Premiers and the Council of Atlantic Premiers and other regional economic and policy issues • Participate in the Coordinating Committee which coordinates all activities of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers (NEG/ECP) Conference and meets as required between annual meetings of the principals • Identify areas where a united NEG/ECP position towards their respective Federal governments can yield policy and material benefits and work with the regional officials to develop this position for Premiers' and Governors' approval • Co-chair with the State of Maine the NEG/ECP Standing Committee on Trade and Globalization directed to examine and make recommendations regarding issues, opportunities and constraints related to transborder trade and globalization relative to the New England and Eastern Canadian regions

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Expand Nova Scotia's international linkages to support and promote Nova Scotia's interests abroad.					
Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Base year measure	Target 04-05	Strategies to achieve the target.
Improved international linkages with international business and government contacts.	Development of more international contacts.	The percent of departments actively assisted by IGA in the development of international business and government contacts.	• 37% of clients indicated that IGA played a role in expanding Nova Scotia's international linkages.	• 55%	• Ensure that Nova Scotia's interests are fairly considered in the development of solutions to transborder issues. • Support the development of trade and investment and ensure Nova Scotia departments and agencies are kept abreast of international ideas. • Manage, with Nova Scotia Business Inc., the participation of the Premier in Team Canada and Team Canada Atlantic Trade Missions. • Collaborate with Economic Development and Protocol to ensure that the Premier is fully briefed for visits of foreign Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Consuls. • Ensure that Nova Scotia's policy and trade positions are known to the appropriate diplomatic representatives accredited to Canada. • Provide line departments and agencies with information gathered from foreign governments and from the Federal department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and its posts abroad. • Maintain and update the database of Nova Scotia's memoranda of understanding with foreign governments.

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Increase awareness and understanding, both within the Nova Scotia government and in other governments, of the Province's position relative to key intergovernmental issues.					
Outcome	Indicator	Measure	Base year measure.	Target 04-05	Strategies to achieve
Greater awareness and understanding of Nova Scotian intergovernmental procedures, policies, practices and positions.	Enhanced line department understanding of sister agency interests and positions adopted by other jurisdictions on key intergovernmental issues.	Level at which line agency information requirements are being met by IGA respecting, key intergovernmental contacts and positions of other jurisdictions.	66% of client departments indicated that IGA was meeting their needs overall.	80%	• Take full advantage of the opportunities provided by Nova Scotia's position as chair of the Annual Premiers' Conference, 2002-03, to ensure that Nova Scotia's concerns and interests are known and considered in the development of the agenda of the Conference, and in the follow-up work with the other Provinces and Territories that implements the Premiers' decisions. • Ensure that the Nova Scotia perspective is considered in the development of Federal policy by working with the Intergovernmental Affairs section of the Privy Council Office, and with other Federal agencies/departments in Ottawa and in the Atlantic region (e.g., the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency). • Maintain and expand the network of Federal, Provincial and Territorial contacts in Intergovernmental Affairs and other departments so as to exchange information and policy positions. • Maintain regular contact with line departments respecting their intergovernmental activity, and keep them abreast of issues involving other governments and IGA activities. • Develop communications objectives to better position the Province of Nova Scotia in its communications with other jurisdictions and with key internal audiences.

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